

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00

XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 EPG-02 SIL-01 OMB-01 IO-13

ACDA-07 /116 W

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R 011804Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8716

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 09307

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CG, EAID, GW, GB

SUBJECT: VISIT OF FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER TO ZAIRE
AND GABON

REFS: (A) BONN 6495; (B) KINSHASA 4780; (C) KINSHASA
4781; (D) LIBREVILLE 1252; (E) BONN 9115

SUMMARY: THE FONOFF RATES FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER'S
LIGHTENING TOUR OF ZAIRE AND GABON (MAY 16-18) AS A
SUCCESS, LONG ON GESTURES BUT SHORT ON SUBSTANCE.
GENSCHER MET FOR THREE HOURS WITH MOBUTU IN LUBUMBASHI
(WHERE HE HAD NOT WANTED TO GO) AND GAVE MOBUTU A
LECTURE ON THE NEED FOR PRIVATE INVESTMENT AS THE KEY TO
ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STABILITY. IN GABON GENSCHER
MET WITH PRESIDENT BONGO AND DISCUSSED BILATERAL RELA-
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TIONS.

END SUMMARY.

1. WHEN THE FRG CABINET MET TO AUTHORIZE AID TO ZAIRE
IN THE WAKE OF THE SHABA INVASION (REFTEL A) GENSCHER'S
VISIT TO ZAIRE WAS PRESENTED AS PART OF THE FRG PROGRAM
TO SIGNAL ITS STRONG SUPPORT FOR MOBUTU. AS ORIGINALLY

PLANNED IN BONN, GENSCHER WAS TO ATTEND THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE GERMAN/ZAIRE MIXED COMMISSION AND THEN DISCUSS CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS AND BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH MOBUTU IN KINSHASA. HOWEVER, FROM KINSHASA CAME WORD THAT MOBUTU WOULD NOT LEAVE THE BELEAGUERED SOUTHERN PROVINCES TO TRAVEL TO KINSHASA EVEN TO MEET SUCH A DISTINGUISHED GUEST. GENSCHER THEN ACQUIESCED TO A MEETING IN LUBUMBASHI SINCE A TRIP TO ZAIRE WITHOUT MEETING MOBUTU WOULD BE WITHOUT PURPOSE.

2. THE MEETING OF THE MIXED COMMISSION IN KINSHASA WAS GENERALLY UNEVENTFUL; GENSCHER'S PRESENCE, ACCORDING TO THE FONOFF, WAS CERTAINLY NOT REQUIRED TO COMPLETE ANY OF ITS BUSINESS (REF C). FOLLOWING THE MEETING IN KINSHASA, GENSCHER AND HIS PARTY FLEW TO LUBUMBASHI WHERE HE MET WITH PRESIDENT MOBUTU FOR THREE HOURS OF WHAT THE FONOFF DESCRIBED AS "VERY FRANK AND VERY OPEN" TALKS WITH PRESIDENT MOBUTU.

3. ACCORDING TO THE FONOFF (ACTING DIRECTOR FOR WESTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA, WHO TRAVELED WITH THE PARTY), THE GENSCHER-MOBUTU TALKS COVERED THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

-- MOBUTU COMPLAINED OF BAD PRESS BEING GIVEN HIM AND HIS GOVERNMENT BY THE WESTERN PRESS. HE SPECIFICALLY CITED DEUTSCHE WELLE FOR CARRYING INACCURATE AND MILEADING REPORTS ON THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN HIS COUNTRY. GENSCHER REPLIED THAT IN A FREE SOCIETY THE PRESS HAD THE FREEDOM TO CALL THE SITUATION AS IT SAW IT.
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-- GENSCHER TOLD MOBUTU THAT A LOCAL EMPLOYEE OF DPA (GERMAN PRESS AGENCY) HAD BEEN DETAINED BY ZAIRIAN AUTHORITIES WITHOUT APPARENT CAUSE. MOBUTU PROMISED TO INVESTIGATE THE MATTER AND ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCES THE INDIVIDUAL CONCERNED WAS RELEASED UNHARMED BEFORE THE END OF THE DAY.

-- GENSCHER THANKED MOBUTU FOR HIS RELEASE OF THE SEVEN JOURNALISTS RECENTLY DETAINED IN ZAIRE. MOBUTU REPORTEDLY "SWALLOWED HARD" AT THE MENTION OF THE INCIDENT, BUT RECOVERED QUICKLY AND ASSERTED THAT THE JOURNALISTS HAD FLAGRANTLY VIOLATED ZAIRE'S LAWS. HE SAID THEY WERE RELEASED ONLY BECAUSE GENSCHER HAD INTERCEDED PERSONALLY AND BECAUSE MOBUTU HAD SUCH A HIGH REGARD FOR GENSCHER AND THE FRG.

-- MOBUTU COMMENTED, NOTABLY WITHOUT RANCOR, THAT ANGOLA'S NETO WAS NOT "HIS OWN MAN" AND COULD, THERE-

FORE, NOT BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR HIS ACTIONS. NORMALIZE
TION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN ZAIRE AND ANGOLA WOULD TAKE A

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 09307

LONG TIME.

-- MOBUTU'S EVALUATION OF THE NEW CONGOLESE PRESIDENT
YHOMBI-OPANGO WAS THAT HE IS NOT A COMMUNIST AND THAT
HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO TRY TO LOOSEN HIS ONE-SIDED
DEPENDENCE ON THE EASTERN BLOCK.

-- MOBUTU EXPLAINED THAT THE RECENT DIFFICULTIES ON THE
ZAMBIAN BORDER WERE BASED PURELY ON A MISUNDERSTANDING.
HE SAID THAT IN ORDER TO PREVENT A REOCCURENCE OF ANY
NEW TENSIONS HE HAD ORDERED THAT NO MILITARY FLIGHTS
TAKE PLACE IN THE AREA.

4. THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE GENSCHER/MOBUTU TALKS, HOWEVER,
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WAS GENSCHER'S LECTURE ON WHAT ZAIRE MUST DO TO OVERCOME ITS ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES. GENSCHER WARNED THAT POLITICAL STABILITY COULD ONLY BE BASED ON A SOUND ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FRAMEWORK. INTERNATIONAL AID BY ITSELF WOULD BE INADEQUATE TO MEET ZAIRE'S NEEDS AND TO PROMOTE THE NECESSARY ECONOMIC STABILITY. WHAT WAS CALLED FOR WAS A FOSTERING OF DOMESTIC CONDITIONS WHICH WOULD ENCOURAGE THE RETURN OF PRIVATE INVESTMENT. MOBUTU REPORTEDLY ACCEPTED GENSCHER'S ADVICE GRACEFULLY AND RECOUNTED THE STEPS HE HAD TAKEN TO REVERSE ZAIRIANIZATION AND TO MEET THE STANDARDS OF INTERNATIONAL LENDING INSTITUTIONS.

5. ON THE MORNING OF MAY 18, GENSCHER FLEW TO LIBREVILLE TO MEET WITH GABON'S PRESIDENT BONGO. THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT, ACCORDING TO THE FONOFF, WAS PURE POLITICS. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE FRG AND GABON HAD BEEN FRIENDLY BUT NOT PARTICULARLY SPARKLING. (BONGO HAD VISITED THE FRG PRIVATELY SEVERAL TIMES IN RECENT YEARS WITHOUT HAVING BEEN GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A FORMAL VISIT. ALSO, THE FRG, BECAUSE OF GABON'S RELATIVE AFFLUENCE, HAS NO MAJOR AID PROGRAM TO GABON) THE VISIT WAS LIMITED TO ONE DAY BECAUSE THERE WAS INSUFFICIENT HOTEL SPACE TO HOUSE GENSCHER AND HIS ENTOURAGE.

6. TALKS BETWEEN GENSCHER AND BONGO WENT EXCEPTIONALLY WELL. BONGO SPECIFICALLY PRAISED THE FRG'S ATTITUDES TOWARD AFRICA AND SAID HE SUPPORTED WESTERN EFFORTS TO SETTLE THE NAMIBIA QUESTION. AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE, IN REF D, PROVIDED AN EXCELLENT SUMMARY OF OTHER DISCUSSIONS. GENSCHER EXTENDED TO BONGO AN INVITATION FROM FRG PRESIDENT SCHEEL TO VISIT THE FRG WHICH WAS ACCEPTED. BONGO WILL PROBABLY VISIT BONN EARLY IN 1978. BONGO, EVER-CONSCIOUS OF HIS UPCOMING OAU PRESIDENCY, EMPHASIZED THAT HE ACCEPTED THE INVITATION AS PRESIDENT OF GABON.

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7. COMMENT: LITTLE OF SUBSTANCE CAME OUT OF GENSCHER'S EXHAUSTING TRIP. HOWEVER, HE DID DEMONSTRATE THE FRG'S SUPPORT FOR TWO MODERATE AFRICAN LEADERS .. MOBUTU AND BONGO -- AND ESTABLISH A CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE NEXT OAU PRESIDENT. IN THE PROCESS, GENSCHER ALSO REAFFIRMED THE FRG'S SUPPORT FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF PEACE-

FUL CHANGE IN AFRICA AND ITS ABIDING OPPOSITION TO
CHANGES IN INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES THROUGH THE USE OF
FORCE. THIS, ACCORDING TO OUR CONTACTS, IS WHAT HE SET
OUT TO DO.
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